Published and Copyright (c) 1999 - 2012
All Rights Reserved

Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor
Rob Mahlert, Associate Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"
Albert Dayes -- "CC: Classic Chips"
Rob Mahlert -- Web site
Thomas J. Andrews -- "Keeper of the Flame"

With Contributions by:

Fred Horvat

To subscribe to A-ONE, change e-mail addresses, or unsubscribe, log on to our website at: www.atarinews.org and click on "Subscriptions".
OR subscribe to A-ONE by sending a message to: dpj@atarinews.org and your address will be added to the distribution list.
To unsubscribe from A-ONE, send the following: Unsubscribe A-ONE
Please make sure that you include the same address that you used to subscribe from.

To download A-ONE, set your browser bookmarks to one of the following sites:

http://people.delphiforums.com/dpj/a-one.htm
Now available:
http://www.atarinews.org

Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!
http://forums.delphiforums.com/atari/

=~=~=~=

A-ONE #1436 09/14/12

~ New Amazon Sales Tax! ~ People Are Talking! ~ Via’s APC Coming!
~ GoDaddy Sales No Attack ~ Men To Quit Facebook? ~ New Kindle Fire!
~ Laptop Inventor Dies! ~ Zuckerberg Double Down ~ New Wii U Price!

~ Valve’s Steam TV Today! ~ Facebook Bigamy Case! ~ Wii U Game Prices!

-* Twitter Hands Over Records! *-
-* BlueToad Blamed for Apple Code Leak *-
-* Google Rejects White House To Pull Clip! *-

=~=~=~=

->From the Editor’s Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"

The U.S. presidential campaign continues to heat up these days, as time is running down toward the election. I’m waiting for it to reach the boiling point as the negative campaigning continues to flow. I think that we should consider ourselves fortunate that these elections only come around every four years! But if you’re enjoying this type of political entertainment, enjoy the ride yet to come!

Until next time...

=~=~=~=

->In This Week’s Gaming Section - Wii U Price, Release Date!
Most Nintendo Wii U Games!
Valve’s "Steam TV"!

=~=~=~=

->A-ONE’s Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Nintendo Wii U Price and Release Date

The week s biggest tech story is no doubt going to be Apple s iPhone 5, but Nintendo is preparing to make a big announcement of its own. It s believed that Nintendo will finally announce a firm price and release date for its hotly anticipated Wii U console. The latest rumors suggest the Wii U will be priced between $249 and $349 and launch in mid-November. Nintendo will be streaming the event live from New York City on its website. Always the odd ball, Nintendo is once again betting on its ability to provide new and innovative ways to control games. With the Wii, Nintendo popularized motion controls; the DS, dual screens and

touchscreens; and the 3DS added glasses-free 3D. It remains to be seen if the Wii U s unique controller and its built-in 6.2-inch touchscreen, NFC and TV remote controls will be enough to distract from the console s graphics, which are only on par with current-generation consoles. Nintendo s Wii U event begins on Thursday, September 13th at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

Most Nintendo Wii U Games

Gamers looking for cheaper console games from the next-generation Wii can toss that idea out the window. Nintendo revealed on Thursday that it will price most of its first-party Wii U games at $59.99 a $10 increase over its previous Wii console games. The more expensive pricing is most likely related to the higher development costs of producing games with high-definition graphics and GamePad controls. Nintendo s markup isn t out of line, either. Both Microsoft s Xbox 360 and Sony s PlayStation 3 have had games with HD graphics selling for $59.99 since 2005 and 2006, respectively. Nintendo is merely playing catch-up.

According to Nintendo president and CEO of America Reggie Fils-Aime, The vast majority of Wii U software will be $59.99. From a first-party perspective. Third parties set their own pricing. However, not all games will be priced at $59.99. There will be exceptions. Wii Fit U is not going to be a $59.99 product with the Balance Board, as an example. But certainly we believe that these games are big enough, robust enough, with enough demand to satisfy a $59.99 MSRP.

At what price third-party publishers will set their games is anybody s guess, but it s not likely to deviate far from Nintendo s pricing we fully expect blockbuster games such as Activision s Call of Duty: Black Ops II and Platinum Games Bayonetta 2 to command top-pricing.

Valve Is Bringing Steam To Your TV Today

Today, Valve will launch the beta of Big Picture mode, a version of Steam designed for your television. That’s right. The de facto central hub of PC gaming is now designed to run while you’re lounging in your living room and with a controller, no less. I’ve tried out Big Picture. It’s sleek, intuitive, and groundbreaking in several ways.

No, this new "Steam TV" isn’t going to make our video game consoles go away. It’s not going to turn your Xbox into a doorstop or obviate your PS3. But Big Picture could be a crucial first step toward making PC gaming more accessible, more convenient, and more suited for living rooms than ever before.

Here are the basics: this afternoon, when Big Picture goes live, you’ll be able to push a button and turn Steam into an entirely new interface. It sort of looks like the dashboard on an Xbox 360, minus the advertisements and other clutter that can make that system so irritating to navigate. And it allows you to do almost everything you can do on vanilla Steam: you can buy games, browse the web, and even chat with your friends using the platform’s standard in-game overlay.

The fonts, icons, and menus are all large enough to be comfortably viewed on a big-screen television, and the prompts are designed for a game controller. You can use Big Picture on your normal monitor with a mouse and keyboard, but that would defeat the purpose: this is an interface designed for your living room. Because the living room, Valve says, is where most people prefer playing video games.

And maybe, just maybe, if fans seem to want it, and if it makes financial sense, the people who make Half-Life will use Big Picture to create their own version of a video game console.

Valve isn't happy with today's gaming consoles. They made that quite clear to me as we sat in one of the back rooms of their Seattle office in late August, looking at Big Picture mode in action.

See, the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 are walled gardens. You can't open them up or modify their insides. Developers can't release new updates or patches to their games without going through a restrictive, bureaucractic certification process. Nothing about these systems is open at all, and Valve doesn't like that.

Still, consoles have some advantages over computers. They're cheaper. More accessible. And you can play them on your sofa, feet propped up, a comfy controller in your hands. It's not so easy to do that with a computer.

At least not yet.

"We're confident in some things that customers want," Valve's Greg Coomer, head of the small team that designed and developed Big Picture mode, told me in his office. "They want a full-screen experience. They want to be in the living room. They want to use a game controller. They wanna have a social gaming experience. And we have this platform that lets us ship a significant portion of that experience."

Valve: "If it's getting involved in shipping some kind of hardware, then we will get involved in doing that if we need to."

While Big Picture won't "connect all the dots," Coomer said, it will make it easier for gamers to play Valve's games and the vast array of games that Valve supports on Steam in the comfort of their living rooms.

I asked the obvious question: is this the first step toward Valve making a console of their own? Maybe the Steam Box that has been rumored (and repeatedly shot down) for months now?

"What we really want is to ship [Big Picture mode] and then learn," Coomer said. "So we want to find out what people value about that. How they make use of it. When they make use of it. Whether it's even a good idea for the broadest set of customers or not. And then decide what to do next.

"So it could be that the thing that really makes sense is to build the box that you're describing. But we really don't have a road map. And we think we're going to learn a tremendous amount through this first release."

No plans. But Steam's Big Picture mode is step #1 of an open-ended gameplan that could eventually lead to the company building or stamping their name on some sort of gaming console in the future.

What Valve really wants to know is what their users do with this new feature. Will people lug bulky computer towers back and forth between

their desks and their living rooms? Will they use their televisions as second monitors? Will they buy dedicated gaming computers to sit next to the TV and run nothing but Steam? (You can toggle a setting that boots up Steam Big Picture as soon as you turn on your PC, effectively turning it into a Steam console.)

Or will fans ignore Big Picture entirely?

"Each individual gamer is going to have to decide in the short term whether the value that Big Picture brings is something they want to configure for themselves," Coomer said. "And for some users it's going to be quite easy. For some users it might not be worth it yet. But that's one of the things we're going to find out when we ship. And then over time, I think we're going to figure out which of those scenarios, or what ways do customers really want us to get involved in solving the rest of the problems that, say, our software can't solve for them.

"And if it's getting involved in shipping some kind of hardware, then we will get involved in doing that if we need to."

Lots of hypothetical possibilities there. Valve could team up with some third-party manufacturer and start selling a Steam-branded bundle, for example, that ships with a controller and an affordable mid-tier computer that runs Big Picture right out of the box. Or maybe Valve could work with an open-source hardware platform like the recently-funded Ouya. (In case you're wondering: No, Coomer says they haven't had any conversations with the folks who make Ouya.)

What matters more is that Big Picture works as promised. And from what I've tried out so far, I don't think fans will be disappointed.

In some ways, Big Picture is just like an Xbox 360's dashboard. In others, it's not. And the system's biggest feature is one that I imagine will be copied quite a bit over the next few years: a total redesign of the virtual keyboard.

On most consoles, you're stuck with a QWERTY keyboard that you have to painstakingly manipulate by dragging a cursor around the screen and selecting one letter or number at a time.

Steam Big Picture's keyboard looks more like a lotus flower (and you can see it in action right below this paragraph). In order to select keys, you move your left thumbstick in one of eight standard directions, then pick one of the buttons on the right side of your controller. When I looked at the mode, we were using a standard Xbox 360 controller, and each of the four colored buttons represented a different letter. So to press M, N, O, or P, for example, you just tilt the joystick diagonally right-down and hit the corresponding button.

Already this gives you instant access to every character in a way that a virtual QWERTY keyboard can't. And the cool thing about this lotus is that it's not awful. In fact, it's actually kind of great. It's intuitive and quick. Seconds after picking up the controller and playing around with the interface, I was writing sentences at a solid, if not perfect pace. It can't quite match a physical keyboard, but it's better than any other virtual typing I've ever tried. A Valve team member proudly noted that when people have tested it out, "they're almost instantly faster than [when using] QWERTY."

TWO SCREENS? Nintendo has their Wii U, Microsoft has Smart Glass, and

Sony has Vita-PS3 cross-compatibility. I asked Valve’s Greg Coomer if they, like all of those other big companies, feel like the future of gaming could lie in dual-screen play.

"We are really interested in it but it hasn’t been any of the focus in our work," he said. "Having a secondary experience driving the primary experience, augmenting it with stuff that’s social but ancillary all those things are great, it’s just not at the front of our priority list right now."

Navigating the interface is also rather easy. You can use a controller’s trigger buttons to zoom around your game library, shop for new games (and take advantage of Steam’s frequent discounts and sales), and interact with your Steam friends.

Fittingly, Big Picture’s store will also highlight some of the games that are most suitable for your controller. You can even browse the internet, a function included, but not often used in today’s gaming consoles. Coomer notes that the staff tried particularly hard to make a web browser that could actually be navigable with a controller, and they seem to have succeeded, although it’s still not quite as pleasant as using a mouse.

Like on normal Steam, you can even multi-task within Big Picture, switching back and forth between a game and your browser without minimizing to the desktop at all.

Future plans for Big Picture mode include auto-correct, context awareness "When you’re in a web browser, it should know that you might want to put ’dot com’ at the end of your address," Coomer said and, in the distant future, some way to support cooperative split-screen mode, so multiple people can sit down in the same living room and simultaneously use their individual Steam accounts.

As for hardware? Some sort of game-changing, earth-shattering, open-source Steam Box that combines the power and flexibility of a computer with the affordability and accessibility of a console?

Let’s not hold our breath. Valve still hasn’t stopped running on Valve Time. But if Big Picture is the first step, it’s a significant one. And after seeing Steam’s TV mode in action, I’m tempted to go out and get a new desktop PC solely for my living room, just to play cheap, high-quality Steam games, to hook up and use alongside my Wii, Xbox, and PlayStation.

Five years from now, though? Maybe Steam will be the only console we need.

=~=~=~=

A-ONE’s Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Twitter Hands Over Records in NY Occupy Case

Twitter on Friday agreed to hand over about three months' worth of tweets to a judge overseeing the criminal trial of an Occupy Wall Street protester, a case that has become a closely watched fight over how much access law enforcement agencies should have to material posted on social networks.

The social networking site had been threatened with steep fines if it did not comply with Judge Matthew Sciarrino Jr.'s order to turn over the records in the case of Malcolm Harris.

But the judge said he would keep the records sealed until after a Sept. 21 hearing challenging his ruling on the messages.

Twitter's lawyer, Terryl Brown, called the options it faced waiving its right to appeal or being in held in contempt of court "unfair" and "unjust," though ultimately Brown handed over a thick white envelope full of Harris' information.

"We are disappointed that Twitter is essentially giving up the fight," Harris' attorney Martin Stolar said after the court hearing.

The Manhattan district attorney's office said Harris' messages could show whether he was aware of the police orders he's charged with disregarding during a protest at the Brooklyn Bridge.

The case began as one of hundreds of disorderly conduct prosecutions after an Oct. 1 march in New York that brought the Occupy protest movement its first burst of worldwide attention. Harris was among more than 700 people arrested when protesters tried to cross the bridge, many on the roadway.

Police said demonstrators ignored warnings to stay on a pedestrian path. Harris, an editor for an online culture magazine, and others say they thought they had police permission to go on the roadway.

Prosecutors want tweets and user information from Sept. 15 to Dec. 31 that were taken down from the public site. After a certain period of time, tweets are automatically flushed out by the system and placed in the site's stored electronic records, Stolar said.

Internet privacy and civil liberties groups have said the case is important because individuals must be able to fight for their constitutional rights, but they also wanted to see how the large and influential company handled the request.

"I think the biggest implication is going to be about how companies are going to react to what happened to Twitter here," said Hanni Fakhoury, a staff attorney with the Electronic Frontier foundation. "One of the things we were happy to see is that Twitter actually took a stand and tried to challenge this most companies wouldn't go that far."

Still, it's a hard argument to make because Twitter by nature is so public, said Joel Reidenberg, a Fordham Law Professor and expert on internet privacy issues.

"The tweets themselves are public information, it's like speaking on a street corner," he said. "His claim to privacy on the tweets is pretty weak, frankly."

Harris, 23, said Friday that he did not delete any incriminating tweets. He told reporters he wasn't sure what the tweets might contain. "Three and

a half months, a lot of nonsense," he said.

Asked whether the case had affected what he posted to Twitter, Harris said: "I guess you'd have to check the feed to find out. It's still public."

Earlier this year, Harris sought to block prosecutors from subpoenaing the information from Twitter Inc. The company stepped in after the judge ordered the messages to be turned over.

Harris had argued that seeking the accompanying user information violated his privacy and free association rights. The data could give prosecutors a picture of his followers, their interactions and his location at various points during the protest, Stolar said.

Twitter had said the case could put it in the unwanted position of having to take on legal fights that users could otherwise conduct on their own. Company lawyers argued that Harris had every right to fight the subpoena.

Its agreements say users own content they post and can challenge demands for their records. The company argued in a court filing that it would be "a new and overwhelming burden" for Twitter to have to champion such causes for them.

Sciarrino said he would review all the material he ordered turned over and would provide "relevant portions" to prosecutors.

Harris has pleaded not guilty and his trial is scheduled for December. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 15 days in jail or a $500 fine, his lawyer said.

"So Twitter handed over a pile of my tweets that'll stay sealed pending a hearing on the 21st." Harris tweeted after the hearing. "Bummer."

Google Rejects White House Request To Pull Mohammad Film Clip

Google Inc rejected a request by the White House on Friday to reconsider its decision to keep online a controversial YouTube movie clip that has ignited anti-American protests in the Middle East.

The Internet company said it was censoring the video in India and Indonesia after blocking it on Wednesday in Egypt and Libya, where U.S. embassies have been stormed by protestors enraged over depiction of the Prophet Mohammad as a fraud and philanderer.

On Tuesday, the U.S. Ambassador to Libya and three other Americans were killed in a fiery siege on the embassy in Benghazi.

Google said was further restricting the clip to comply with local law rather than as a response to political pressure.

"We've restricted access to it in countries where it is illegal such as India and Indonesia, as well as in Libya and Egypt, given the very sensitive situations in these two countries," the company said. "This approach is entirely consistent with principles we first laid out in 2007."

White House officials had asked Google earlier on Friday to reconsider whether the video had violated YouTube's terms of service. The guidelines can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/t/community_guidelines.

Google said on Wednesday that the video was within its guidelines.

U.S. authorities said on Friday that they were investigating whether the film's producer, Nakoula Basseley Nakoula, a 55-year old Egyptian Coptic Christian living in Southern California, had violated terms of his prison release. Basseley was convicted in 2010 for bank fraud and released from prison on probation last June.

Apple ID Code Leak 'Sourced to US Firm BlueToad'

A digital publishing firm has said it believed it was the source of Apple device ID codes posted to the internet.

Hackers who identified themselves as being part of the Antisec movement published more than one million unique device identifiers (UDID) last week.

They claimed the material had come from a laptop belonging to an FBI officer - something the agency denied.

Florida-based firm BlueToad apologised for the leak adding that it thought the risk to iOS users was "very low".

"When we discovered that we were the likely source of the information in question, we immediately reached out to law enforcement to inform them and to co-operate with their ongoing criminal investigation of the parties responsible for the criminal attack and the posting of the information," the firm's chief executive, Paul DeHart, wrote on his company's blog.

The FBI confirmed to Reuters that "it certainly does appear that BlueToad was where the information was actually compromised".

UDIDs are a unique 40-character string given to iPhones and iPads to help Apple distinguish the machines.

Although it is against Apple's guidelines, some app developers use the codes to identify devices to avoid resorting to usernames and passwords.

If attackers exploited a list of UDIDs and knew which apps used them inappropriately, they could, in theory, compromise users' privacy.

Apple plans to introduce an alternative system and no longer accepts apps in its store that collect the codes.

"With iOS 6 we introduced a new set of APIs [application program interfaces] meant to replace the use of the UDID and will soon be banning the use of UDID," a spokesman told the BBC.

"As an app developer, BlueToad would have access to a user's device information such as UDID, device name and type. Developers do not have access to users' account information, passwords or credit card information, unless a user specifically elects to provide that information to the developer."

The Antisec post had suggested a list of 12.4 million UDIDs had been extracted from an FBI agent’s laptop along with matching usernames, mobile numbers and other personal details. The group released a file containing one million codes as proof.

The implication was that the FBI might have been using them to spy on Apple device owners.

The news had the potential to be particularly damaging as the agent named - Christopher Stangl, from the agency’s Regional Cyber Action Team - had represented it in public at security conferences.

However, the FBI strongly denied the allegation shortly after it was made, publishing a tweet that read: "We never had the info in question. Bottom Line: TOTALLY FALSE."

BlueToad has subsequently added that less than two million Apple device name and UDID codes had been stolen, rather than the claim of 12 million codes and other personal information.

One security expert suggested the news would undermine future claims by Antisec.

"Whatever credibility they had has certainly been damaged by making a claim that appears to be entirely false and having totally misrepresented their abilities," said Rik Ferguson, director of security research at Trend Micro.

"They must have known this would be exposed at some point.

"They had probably hoped that it would only be after the FBI had carried out a longer internal audit to confirm it had not been compromised, resulting in confusion and expense in the meantime."

Only a Few Hours Until New Amazon Sales Tax Starts in California

Ecommerce giant Amazon will begin collecting sales tax on purchases made in California at 12:01 a.m. PT Saturday. The grace period negotiated between Amazon and the state of California in September 2011 officially ends then, and the government will begin to collect taxes on items shipped to California, despite Amazon not having a physical presence in the state.

Depending on location, California residents currently pay 7.25% to 9.75% in sales taxes on purchases made in the state. Amazon currently collects sales tax in seven states and has deals in place to collect in six more beginning in 2013.

State officials estimate that the new law should bring in more than $300 million in the next year alone, helping to turn around its current $20 billion deficit.

Many online shoppers are unhappy about the change, taking to social media to voice their opinions and encourage binge shopping before sales tax is tacked onto invoices. "Am I the only one who’s waiting until Saturday to buy from Amazon?" one state official asked his social media followers.

A spokesperson for Amazon said the site expects a smooth transition to collecting sales tax this weekend.

Last fall, California passed a win-win law that has allowed us to expand our investment and job creation in the state, Amazon spokesperson Scott Stanzel told Mashable. As analysts have noted, we offer customers the best prices with or without sales tax. We collect sales tax or its equivalent in more than half of the areas where we do business and we are pleased to say we are thriving in those geographies.

Brick and mortar locations within California are greeting the new law with open arms, expecting it to level the commerce playing field and potentially curb showrooming by shoppers who enter physical locations solely to compare prices, then order online for cheap.

Currently, California residents are expected to calculate and report sales tax from online purchases directly to the state s Franchise Tax Board, though less than 1% actually do so.

But there may be a silver lining for online shoppers: In states where Amazon had previously avoided having a physical presence because of the tax dispute, the company may begin to construct warehouses and distribution centers, meaning many orders could ship same- or next-day.

Will you still continue to shop online, or is paying sales tax an incentive to buy local? Let us know in the comments.

GoDaddy Says No Attack Behind Web Outage

GoDaddy.com says a Web hosting outage that involved thousands and possibly millions of websites on Monday was due to internal problems, not an attack by hackers.

The outage lasted for about four hours and affected mainly small-business sites. GoDaddy.com hosts more than 5 million websites.

In a statement Tuesday, the Scottsdale, Ariz., company says "internal network events" fouled up its routers, which direct data traffic.

On Monday, a Twitter feed that claimed to be affiliated with the "Anonymous" hacker group said it was behind the outage and drew widespread ire and attention.

Another Twitter account, known to be associated with Anonymous, suggested the first one was just taking advantage of an outage it had nothing to do with.

Zuckerberg Ready To ’Double Down’ on Facebook

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg hasn’t enjoyed seeing his company’s stock get pummeled on Wall Street this summer, but he is relishing the opportunity to prove his critics wrong.

"I would rather be in a cycle where people underestimate us because I'd rather be underestimated," Zuckerberg said Tuesday. "I think it gives us the latitude to go out and make some big bets."

Zuckerberg, 28, made his remarks before a standing-room-only audience at a tech conference in San Francisco in his first interview since Facebook Inc.'s rocky initial public offering in May.

The social networking leader's stock has lost nearly half its value since the IPO. More than $50 billion has been lopped off Facebook's market value as the company's shares have fallen from $38 to Tuesday's closing price of $19.43.

No one has lost as much as Zuckerberg, who has seen the value of his Facebook holdings fall about more than $9 billion. That while hearing more skeptics second-guess his ability to lead the company that he founded eight years ago in his Harvard University dorm room.

Since speaking during Facebook's first earnings conference call as a public company nearly seven weeks ago, Zuckerberg has remained largely out of the spotlight.

Wearing a gray T-shirt, jeans and sneakers, Zuckerberg looked at ease through his half-hour appearance. He smiled frequently and even chuckled a few times before a San Francisco audience composed largely of fellow geeks who, like him, tend to enjoy talking about computer coding and building cool products instead of discussing revenue growth and business strategies.

Yet Zuckerberg clearly was aiming many of his remarks at investors. He emphasized that Facebook cared about making money as well as pursuing his mission to make the world a "more open and connected place." He also repeated his belief that the company would figure out numerous ways to profit from the growing number of its 955 million worldwide users who visit is online hangout through mobile applications instead of Web browsers on desktop computers.

Zuckerberg said the performance of Facebook's stock "has obviously been disappointing," and will probably cause some demoralized employees to defect. But he said he hopes most workers will stay and "double down" on Facebook's future.

"I think it is really easy to for folks to underestimate how really fundamentally good mobile is for us," Zuckerberg told his interviewer, former blogger turned venture capitalist Michal Arrington, at the TechCrunch Disrupt conference.

Zuckerberg shouldered some of the blame for the misperceptions about Facebook's mobile prospects, saying he made a mistake by initially relying on a computer coding called HTML 5 so the company's applications could run on a multitude of different mobile operating systems without making a lot of changes. That resulted in sub-par experiences for many users, Zuckerberg acknowledged, prompting Facebook to use more customization tools to account for the differences in the software that run different devices such as the iPhone and Android phones.

Some investors evidently liked what Zuckerberg had to say. Facebook shares gained 66 cents, or 3.4 percent in Tuesday's extended trading after he took the stage.

The ubiquity of smartphones has created problems for Facebook and other advertising-dependent Internet companies because the smaller screens on those devices have less space to show commercial messages around the main content.

One way Facebook will address that challenge is by inserting more ads into the mobile news feeds that highlight status updates and photos shared by users' friends and families, according to Zuckerberg. He once again tried to shoot down recurring speculation that Facebook is developing its own smartphone like Apple and Google Inc.

"It is so clearly the wrong strategy for us," Zuckerberg said. "It doesn't move the needle for us."

But that doesn't mean Zuckerberg doesn't appreciate the power and allure of a sleek smartphone. He said he even used one to write a lengthy manifesto about his vision for Facebook that was included in the company's IPO documents.

Zuckerberg indicated Facebook is likely to intensify its rivalry with Google Inc. by developing more ways to search on its website. As it is, Facebook already processes about 1 billion search requests a day, Zuckerberg said, "and we basically are not even trying."

That laid-back attitude toward search will eventually change, Zuckerberg said, although he wouldn't provide specifics. A more robust search engine "would be one obvious, interesting thing for us to do in the future," he said.

Google is already trying to maintain its dominance of its Internet search engine with an alternative social network called Plus that it launched last year largely to gain more insights about its users' preferences.

Zuckerberg has signaled his faith in Facebook's stock by pledging not to sell any of his more than 503 million shares for at least another year, even as some of the company's early investors and employees reduce their holdings.

Tuesday gave him an opportunity to deliver a reminder that Facebook has overcome past adversity when changes to its website's design and privacy policies provoked strident objections from users who threatened to abandon the social network. Facebook overcame those protests to keep on growing.

"Facebook has not been an uncontroversial company," Zuckerberg said. "It's not like this is the first up and down we have ever had."

Via's APC, A $49 Android Desktop Computer, Goes on Sale This Summer

We've seen a profusion of relatively low-cost PCs and tablets over the last few years, but Taiwanese electronics company Via's APC is cheap even by these standards: it's a $49 low-power desktop computer running a modified version of Android 2.3. Announced today, the APC is meant as a simple way to connect to the internet, so you won't get a great deal of computing power. It contains an 800MHz processor, 512MB of DDR3 memory, 2GB of flash storage, and can connect to a monitor or TV to output a resolution of up to 720p. It also consumes a fraction of a standard

desktop’s power: 13.5 watts at maximum and only 4 watts when idle.

Unlike more luxurious nettops (a phrase we admit we never thought we’d use), the APC doesn’t come with its own chassis. It’s based on a new form factor, Neo-ITX, but will fit in any case designed for a Mini-ITX or microATX machine. The choice of Android here is interesting, especially since Via had to redesign it for optimized mouse and keyboard support. Given the work that went into that, we’re surprised that it isn’t using Ice Cream Sandwich, which supports hover events and better mouse interaction, or taking a cue from the Eee or OLPC notebook and simply using a lightweight PC Linux build. The APC should go on sale this July, and pre-orders will apparently be starting soon.

Amazon s 7-inch Kindle Fire HD Now Available

Friday isn t just iPhone 5 preorder day it s also the first day that Amazon s brand new Kindle Fire HD tablet goes on sale. The 8.9-inch version of the sleek new slate won t be available until next month, but the 7-inch model can now be purchased on Amazon s website for just $199. The new Kindle Fire HD features a 1,280 x 800-pixel high-definition display, Dolby audio, a 1.2GHz dual-core processor, a front-facing HD webcam and access to Amazon s Prime library of streaming movies and TV shows. The non-HD model of Amazon s Kindle Fire is also available starting Friday for just $159.

Laptop Inventor Moggridge Dies At 69

Bill Moggridge, the London-born industrial designer credited with creating the first laptop computer, died on Saturday aged 69 after a battle with cancer.

Moggridge is best known as the creator of the GRiD Compass (pictured), a device which introduced many of the design traits used in modern laptops, including the hinged case, the flat display and the low-profile keyboard. Moggridge said that when he tested the device prototype in 1981, it was the first time he had used a computer.

The impetus for the project came from John Ellenby, the founder of GRiD Systems, according to Moggridge. Ellenby had met a top-level US government official who told of the need for a device with the power of a desktop computer, but which could fit into a briefcase. That became the guiding principle for the Compass project, which GRiD Systems introduced in 1982 for $8,150 (£5,000).

The GRiD Compass was popular with the British and US military, which used it during the 1983 invasion of Grenada, according to The Independent. NASA also took Compass into orbit on Space Shuttle missions.

Moggridge was born in London in 1943 to Henry Moggridge, a civil servant, and Helen Moggridge, an artist. He studied industrial design at the Central St. Martins College of Art and Design in London, where he founded Moggridge and Associates in 1969.

In 1979 he opened a new firm, ID Two, in Palo Alto, California, where he

worked with Apple, Microsoft and other companies on experimental projects. In 1991 he merged his firm with those of two other designers to form IDEO, an influential design agency whose products included the Palm V handheld computer.

Human element

Throughout his career Moggridge was known for his focus on the human or empathic element of product design, something now highly developed by companies such as Apple. Moggridge is said to have pioneered a design process that involved anthropologists and psychologists as well as engineers and designers.

This focus led him to increasingly focus on the design of software and interfaces rather than physical objects, something Moggridge wrote about in his 2006 book Designing Interactions.

Moggridge was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Smithsonian s Cooper-Hewitt design museum in 2009, and took over as director of the museum in 2010. He was awarded the Prince Philip Designers Prize in 2010.

Should Men Quit Facebook? Brut’s ’Mantervention’ App Says Yes

Let’s face it, posting stuff on Facebook isn’t the most macho pursuit in the world. So, if you’re of the male persuasion and fear that the social platform is making you soft, you might want to avail yourself of Brut’s latest Facebook app.

The deodorant maker’s app is basically a 5-minute or so video in which a stubbly guy berates you and some of your posts. The interactive aspect comes via the magic of profile access, a trick we’ve seen many times before - such as this True Blood teaser starring you and your Facebook friends.

To underscore his point, the Mantervention man makes his pitch in a room full of stereotypical Facebookers - such as The Networker, Hashtag Harry, Mr. TMI, the Philosopher and "Sign My Petition" Chick.

Whether the app will convince you to quit Facebook is one thing. Whether it will persuade you to buy Brut’s grooming products is another. After all, the brand faces some pretty stiff competition on the social media front from Old Spice.

Guilty Plea in Facebook Bigamy Case

ADMISSION: A Washington man whose wife discovered through Facebook that he had married a second woman has pleaded guilty to attempted bigamy.

HOW HE WAS CAUGHT: His first wife learned of his second wife through a Facebook "people you may know" notification and alerted authorities. He has annulled his second marriage and is divorcing his first wife.

SENTENCING: Alan O’Neill was spared jail time but will be on probation for a year. The charge is a gross misdemeanor.

=~=~=~=

Atari Online News, Etc. is a weekly publication covering the entire Atari community. Reprint permission is granted, unless otherwise noted at the beginning of any article, to Atari user groups and not for profit publications only under the following terms: articles must remain unedited and include the issue number and author at the top of each article reprinted. Other reprints granted upon approval of request. Send requests to: dpj@atarinews.org

No issue of Atari Online News, Etc. may be included on any commercial media, nor uploaded or transmitted to any commercial online service or internet site, in whole or in part, by any agent or means, without the expressed consent or permission from the Publisher or Editor of Atari Online News, Etc.

Opinions presented herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, or of the publishers. All material herein is believed to be accurate at the time of publishing.